



ter, anew Food City employee, is delighted to be working.

Photo by Jim Dossett

None could learn a lot from him'

Job brings smile to 32-year-old with Downs Syndrome

Reporter.

ter can't hide the fact with purpose. manifests itself in his re meticulously bags you with those bags

ma'm?" says Robert, leaning forward, blue eyes shining with bright anticipation at the opportunity to serve.

The customer politely declines the offer, and Robert returns to his task at the check out counter, grinning happily at his good fortune and loving every minute of his very first job.

"Nobody would ever tell him, work

People would lead him on, telling him 'we don't need anybody right now, but we'll call you', said Robert's mother, Kay.

"He would say 'I wish I could work' and all I could say was 'Robert, you're different.' I didn't want to hurt his

PageID# : pageID>

See NEW JOB, Page 12A

Deputies now hit with civil rights charges

By SUSAN SHARP
LaFollette-Bless Reporter

Five former Campbell County law enforcement officials now are facing federal charges.

These new charges are in addition to the existing ones at the local level in the same case.

As former law enforcement officials, they have been accustomed to being the accusers. Now, a

man who they arrested on July 8, 2004 is pointing the finger at them.

Last week, former Campbell County Sheriff Department Detectives David Webber and Sammy Franklin, former Patrol Officer Will Carroll and former Reserve Officer Shayne Green were charged violating the civil rights of Lester Eugene Siler.

Former Deputy Josh Monday was charged with brandishing a handgun during and in relation to a crime of violence in the matter, court records indicate.

In Campbell County Criminal Court, the men, with the exception of Carroll, had been indicted on official oppression

and perjury charges last fall. Carroll was not indicted by the local grand jury.

District Attorney General Paul Phillips said Webber, Franklin, Monday and Green are currently slated for trial in Campbell County at the end of the month.

"The U.S. attorneys under their statutes, which is more broadly defined than ours, did what the grand jury could have done but chose not to," said Phillips.

"The federal authorities have said all along they expected to bring a case and do so before ours. This will effectively preempt ours," he said.

Phillips said the former deputies could have sought probation on the state charges, but federal charges are different.

"They (federal charges) almost always involve serving time" in prison, he said.

Court records state the officers went to Siler's home in the White Oak community to serve a violation of probation warrant on July 8, 2004.

However, details revealed

See CHARGES, Page 16A

Charges...

since that hot afternoon in July have painted a picture of a suspect who was subjected to various forms of coercion, intimidation and alleged abuse at the hands of the deputies.

Informations filed in the eastern division of the U.S. District Court say Webber, Franklin, Green and Carroll conspired in these attempts.

The former officers are accused of using slaps, plastic baseball bats and bare-knuckle tactics to force Siler to sign a consent form to search his home. The deputies said they were looking for drugs, the filings say.

Monday is accused of brandishing a firearm in the commission of these crimes.

The court documents tell a story of the men arriving and Franklin ordering Siler's wife, Jenny, and the couple's young son to leave the home.

After the two are gone, the filings say Siler was terrorized by the officers while being handcuffed and seated in a chair.

During the episode, it has been reported in court documents that Siler's head was submerged in a fish tank of water and an overflowing toilet.

It also says that at one point Green "and another conspirator" attached wires from a battery charger and told Siler they would shock him.

The information relating to Webber says "he assisted and encouraged" this act while also encouraging the physical abuse and torment of Siler.

In an interview with the LaFollette Press following Siler's arrest on narcotics charges last July, Webber said Siler ran from the home with several bottles of pills when

officers arrived to execute the warrant.

Webber said the officers had to chase Siler and eventually caught him after he became stuck in a thicket of briars.

After capturing him, Webber said, officers recovered over 100 pills from Siler including the pain killer oxycontin.

In that same interview, Webber expressed frustration that Siler had been released on a \$25,000 bail. Siler, who was on 11 years' probation for 10 other narcotics charges the preceding year, had racked up five more charges after the arrest.

Those charges were later dropped, according to court records.

Sheriff Ron McClellan terminated the officers last July after the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (TBI) conducted an inquiry into allegations deputies abused Siler.

McClellan said the TBI played an audiotape for him of the events that took place in Siler's trailer that afternoon — a tape the officers did not know existed until much later.

"It's hard to put into words my feelings," McClellan said in response to the tape.

"I wasn't pleased with some of the things I heard," he said.

McClellan said he "did" direct those guys to get (Siler) but it wasn't a wanted dead or alive deal.

"We just made it a top priority," the sheriff said.

He added the department had received numerous calls on Siler's alleged drug activity and stopping it was important.

McClellan recalled seeing the suspect on the evening of July 8, 2004 after Siler was brought into the jail.

"He appeared to be under

some type of influence. He didn't seem coherent. He said the guys had hit him," the sheriff said.

Siler was examined by a nurse at jail who saw "no visible injury," according to McClellan.

The sheriff said he "feels sorry for the families (of the officers) and for the victim who was allegedly abused."

"It is not supposed to be that way," the sheriff said.

McClellan still offers praise for Webber and Franklin for their work prior to this incident.

"David produced one of the largest drug round ups in years," McClellan said of his former head of the narcotics division.

Franklin, who once served as DARE officer and was later promoted to a detective dealing with child abuse, also re-

Continued from Page One

ceived praise from McClellan. "I'm not going to forget what he has done for the community and the children in it," McClellan said.

Michael Farley, who represents Siler, declined comment on the federal filings.

"Other things have developed at this time," he said on Tuesday.

Farley did say he would be taking further action on behalf of his client soon.

U.S. Attorney Charles Atchley, who filed the information, said on Monday "the case will either be resolved by a plea or a trial."

According to him, no date has been set for either.

"Being prosecuted by federal authorities is a lot like being struck by lightning. It doesn't happen often, but when it does, you know it," Phillips said.

School...

Continued from 1A

"I'm disappointed, however, I am not surprised, that I have been told by many of our students that their teachers are telling them to stay home."

"I had hoped that we in Campbell County could gain the reputation of 'valuable edu-